

We claim:

1. A closure panel assembly for closing an opening defined in a fixed panel, the assembly comprising:

a pair of guide rails affixed to the fixed panel on generally opposite sides of the opening; and

a sliding panel having an outer face, and a first and second edge bordering the outer face, the first and second edges being respectively disposed within the first and second guide rails guiding movement of the sliding panel between a closed position generally coving the opening and an open position displaced in a first direction from the closed position; and

a compression seal on one of the sliding panel and a periphery of the opening,

wherein each guide rail generally includes an engagement portion that overlies a portion of the outer face of the sliding panel when the sliding panel is in or near the closed position, the engagement portion of one guide rail including at least one first surface feature projecting laterally in the general direction of the opening defined in the fixed panel, and

wherein the portion of the outer face of the sliding panel includes at least one second surface feature projecting laterally toward the engagement portion of the at least one guide rail, the first and second surface features engaging each other when the sliding panel is moved into the closed position to displace the sliding panel laterally toward the fixed panel to compress the seal about the periphery of the opening.

2. The assembly of claim 1, wherein one of the engagement portion of the one guide rail and the portion of the sliding panel has a pair of first or second surface features, the pair of first or second surface features being positioned relative to the opening such that one of the pair of first or second surface features engages the surface feature on the other of the engagement portion of the one guide rail and the sliding panel as the sliding panel is moved into a fully-open position relative to the opening, whereupon the sliding panel is displaced by such engagement toward the fixed panel to thereby at least partially compress a portion of the seal.

3. The assembly of claim 1, wherein a third surface feature is defined on one of the sliding panel and a guide rail, such that the third surface feature engages one of the first and second surface features to urge the sliding panel towards the fixed panel when the sliding panel is in a partially-open position between the closed position and the fully-open position, whereby the seal is at least partially compressed.

4. The assembly of claim 1, wherein the engagement portion of the one guide rail continuously overlies the portion of the outer face of the sliding panel.

5. The assembly of claim 1, wherein the sliding panel is formed of glass, and wherein the at least one first surface feature on the engagement portion of the at least one guide rail is formed of a non-marring material.

6. The assembly of claim 5, wherein the at least one first surface feature is formed of a plastic material.

7. A closure panel assembly for closing an opening defined in a fixed panel, the assembly comprising:

a pair of guide rails affixed to the fixed panel on generally opposite sides of the opening; and

a sliding panel having an outer face, and a first and second edge bordering the outer face, the first and second edges being respectively disposed within the first and second guide rails such that the first and second guide rails guide the movement of the sliding panel between a closed position generally coving the opening and an open position displaced in a first direction from the closed position; and

a compression seal on one of the sliding panel and a periphery of the opening,

wherein one guide rail generally includes an engagement portion that overlies a portion of the outer face of the sliding panel when the sliding panel is in or near the closed position, the engagement portion including at least one first surface feature projecting laterally in the general direction of the opening defined in the fixed panel, and

wherein the portion of the outer face of the sliding panel includes at least one second surface feature projecting laterally toward the engagement portion of the one guide rail, the first and second surface features engaging each other when the sliding panel is moved into the closed position to displace the sliding panel laterally toward the fixed panel to compress the seal about the periphery of the opening.

8. The assembly of claim 7, wherein the engagement portion of the one guide rail includes a pair of first surface features positioned relative to the opening such that one of the pair of first surface features engages a selected second surface feature on the sliding panel when the sliding panel is in the closed position, and the other of the pair of first surface features engages the selected second surface feature on the sliding panel when the sliding panel is in the fully-open position.

9. The assembly of claim 8, wherein engagement of the other of the pair of first surface features and the selected second surface feature displaces the sliding panel toward the fixed panel to at least partially compress only a portion of the periphery of the seal.

10. The assembly of claim 8, wherein a third surface feature is defined on the one guide rail, the third surface feature engaging the selected second surface feature on the sliding panel to displace the sliding panel towards the fixed panel when the sliding panel is in a partially-open position between the closed position and the open position.

11. The assembly of claim 10, wherein engagement of the third surface feature and the selected second surface feature displaces the sliding panel toward the fixed panel to at least partially compress only a portion of the periphery of the seal.

12. The assembly of claim 7, wherein the engagement portion of the one guide rail continuously overlies the portion of the outer face of the sliding panel.

13. The assembly of claim 7, wherein the sliding panel is formed of glass, and wherein the at least one first surface feature on the engagement portion of the one guide rail is formed of a non-marring material.

14. The assembly of claim 13, wherein the at least one first surface feature is formed of a plastic material.